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CLASSIFICATION OF BIBLICAL EXPRESSIONS IN MASS MEDIA

***Abstract.** This article discusses such notions as «Biblical expressions» and «Biblical idioms». Analysis is made of their functioning and usage in mass media. The article demonstrates classification of the Biblical expressions and idioms, which may be quite applicable for both Russian and English languages. This classification is illustrated with the examples from mass media.*

***Keywords:** Biblical expressions, Biblical idioms, mass media, classification of Biblical expressions and idioms.*

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КЛАССИФИКАЦИЯ БИБЛЕЙСКИХ ВЫРАЖЕНИЙ В СМИ

***Аннотация.** Статья посвящена анализу таких понятий, как, «библейские выражения» и «библейские фразеологизмы». Анализируется их функционирование и использование в СМИ. В статье приведена классификация библейских выражений и фразеологизмов, которые могут быть вполне применимы как для русского, так и для английского языков. Данная классификация проиллюстрирована примерами из СМИ.*

Ключевые слова: *библейские выражения, библейские идиомы, СМИ, классификация библейских выражений и идиом.*

Throughout the years the Bible has had a huge impact not only on the life of people, on their thoughts and choices, but also on the literary languages, including Russian and English.

Biblical expressions and idioms began to be actively used in the modern life: in films, in everyday speech and even in mass media headlines. Unfortunately, their meaning is often distorted and really far from the original one. So, what exactly are these concepts and what role do they play in the modern life?

Biblical expressions and Biblical idioms can be defined as words, phrases or expressions, which resulted from the plots or stories taken from the Bible. Some of the Biblical expressions are now completely unused, some are used very rarely; however, we use most of them quite often in written and spoken form [1].

Biblical expressions can also be formed using geographical names of places or the names of characters from the Bible, for example: «Adam's apple» (Old Testament), «Kiss of Judas» (Gospel), «Temptation of Christ» (Gospel of Luke). Some Biblical texts may reflect a whole Biblical story, for example: «Solomon's decision» (Old Testament), «Go back to square one» (Old Testament), «into fire and water» (Old Testament). Biblical expressions are capable of reflecting the sermons of Christ, describing the life of that time, etc [2].

Let's review the classification of Biblical expressions and idioms. The characteristics of A. Berich and J. Matesic were selected for a more detailed analysis of the topic.

They classified Biblical expression into the two groups:

1) Phraseological units, which already in the sacred scriptures and are distinguished by their integrity in meaning. For example: «A wolf in sheep's clothing» (New Testament), «To keep as the apple of smb's eye» (Old Testament), «Seek and you shall find» (New Testament);

2) Expressions that had been formed using Biblical collocations and received a completely different meaning at the semantic level over time, for example: «A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush» (Live of Saints), «A leopard cannot change its spots» (New Testament), «To hide one's light under a bushel» (New Testament) [1].

Equally noteworthy is the fact that Biblical expressions are often modified during the use. These changes take place using the following techniques: *calque* (borrowing foreign words, expressions or phrases), *paraphrasing* (reworking the phrase to a more suitable variant), *omission* (implies the refusal to transfer semantically redundant words in translation) and *explication* (implies elements of meaning that must be expressed in translation using additional lexical units).

These techniques and classification will be used in further research of the use of biblical units in Russian and English mass media. However, it is really important to indicate the meaning of «mass media», as mentioned in the aim of this article.

Mass media is some kind of a social vehicle, which promotes to highlight current issues and interprets public and political life. One crucial feature of the mass media is the ability to combine two distinct functions of language: informative function (message function) and expressive function (effect function).

It should also be noted that the modern mass media use different foreign words, clichés, catch phrases and, of course, Biblical expressions and idioms [3].

Then we shall select Russian and English mass media using Biblical expressions and idioms. This units will be classified into two groups, according to the writings of the A. Berich and J. Matesic and the techniques used in the examples will also be indicated.

Let's start by considering two examples taken from Russian mass media:

1) «В России же, напротив, дурным тоном считается **замечать сучок в чужом глазу**, да и вообще лезть не в свое дело» [4]. (In the Bible, this phrase sounds like: «**Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but fail to notice the beam in your own eye?**» – (Matthew 7:3) [5]. In this example, the original meaning of the Biblical expression wasn't changed, but correctly used and interpreted. So, we can refer

it to the first group. In this case, the paraphrasing technique was used, as the Biblical phrase was converted into a more modern and appropriate form);

2) «*Почему **запретный плод** так сладок?*» [6] (In the Bible this phrase sounds like: «*And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, «You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, **but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat**, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die»* - (Genesis 2:17) [5]. In this example, the Biblical phrase wasn't changed, but its meaning was lost. In this case, it was not about something serious, but only about a human weakness in front of candy. So, this Biblical phrase belongs to the second group. Calque was also used in this example. A literal translation of the language unit was used here: «запретный плод» - «forbidden fruit»);

English mass media examples will be considered next:

1) «***Love thy neighbour?** Exploring prejudice against ethnic minority groups in a divided society: the case of Northern Ireland*» [7]. (In the Bible this phrase sounds like: «*Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, **Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself***»- (Romans 13:9) [5]. This Biblical phraseological unit wasn't changed externally, as well as in semantic meaning or use in the found and used example. We can refer it to the first group. The omission technique was also used here, due to the fact that redundant semantic units were not transmitted here. These units can be easily recovered in the context);

2) «***A Bird in the Hand is a Certainty, but a Bird in the Bush May Sing***»: *Description of a Literature Course About Humans and Nature Using a Curriculum of Inclusion* [8]. (The full version is – «*A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush*. The origin of this phrase is: «*It is **more sekyl a byrd in your fest, than to haue three in the sky a-boue***» – (*The Life of St Katharine of Alexandria*) [5]. Actually, this expression was taken from «*Live of Saints*», which is not included in the Bible. It retained its appearance; however, its meaning was lost. In this example, there is an interpretation about nature and human, without any reference to the Bible. We can refer it to the second group. In this example, we use an explication. Here, adding a noun to Biblical

expression we acquire a new shade of meaning, which characterized its non-standardness).

As it was said before, Biblical expressions and idioms are used extensively in the modern mass media for making the text more colourful at the semantic level. By selecting and classifying Biblical expressions in the English and Russian mass media, the modification of these units was demonstrated as well as their functioning in the text. It was also noted that Biblical expressions were modified through lexical techniques. It should be necessary to define that in using Biblical idioms it is essential not to distort the general meaning of the phrase.

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